

## All Saints 2020

- We begin every November with this great feast...the Solemnity of All Saints.
  - It's a day for us to celebrate...
    - all the great men and women...who followed Jesus closely...
      - who lived lives of holiness...in both...great and small ways...
      - and who continue to teach others...how to do the same.
    - We remember not only the names we know...
      - but also those we don't...
      - those who've labored in secret...
      - with great passion and zeal for the Lord.
- But I'd like to focus on one particular saint...
  - whose spirituality...I was first introduced to...
    - while living with our auxiliary bishop at the time...
    - now Archbishop Gomez...out in LA.
- St. Josemaria Escriva was born in Spain in 1902.
  - His first job was in a clothing store...
    - but he felt a strong call...to give his life to Jesus...and to become a priest.
    - So he entered the seminary...and in 1925 he was ordained.
  - While on a retreat...he sensed a call within a call.
    - He wanted to teach lay people...
      - how they could become saints in their daily lives.
    - He realized that people often identified holiness...
      - with priests and nuns.
    - But he wanted to teach people...
      - how they could serve God...
      - by living well...the circumstances of their own lives...
      - whether as a lawyer...a tailor...a homemaker...or a factory worker.
  - To do that...
    - he founded Opus Dei...
      - which means the "*Work of God*"
    - He also wrote a book called "*The Way*"...
      - which is a collection of wise sayings...
      - mapping out what it means to be a saint...in the modern world.
- And one of the first things we learn from him...is that saints are not perfect.
  - He says: "*The saint is a sinner who keeps on trying.*"
  - So being a saint...
    - is really a lifelong process...
    - of falling down...and getting back up again...and all with the Lord's grace.
  - The saint isn't someone who's arrived...
    - who has it all figured out...
    - with total control of themselves...
    - and knows the exact...right thing to do...in every situation.
    - The saint isn't even someone who never sins.

- Rather...the saint is the one...who keeps trying...
  - despite their own weakness and failings.
- It's that constant striving...the persevering...
  - that's how we grow in holiness.
- And because of this...
  - even the greatest sinner...can become the greatest saint.
    - we just need the humility and perseverance...
    - to keep repenting of our sins...
    - and striving to do better...by relying more on God's grace.
- St. Josemaria...also said that:
  - *"Great holiness consists in carrying out the little duties of every moment."*
  - And that we should...
  - *"Do everything for love. That way there are no little things. Everything is big."*
  - And so...if you're doing laundry or washing the dishes for your family...
    - you can use that...to grow in holiness....
      - if you except that drudgery...to grow in things like patience.
      - and by offering it as a sacrifice...for the salvation of souls.
  - So each time you fold the clothes...
    - pray for whoever will wear them...
  - Or each time you wash a dish...
    - pray for the person who last used it...
    - especially if they were supposed to clean it!
  - In that way...those ordinary...mundane things...
    - are touched by the love of the Lord...
    - and help bring salvation to others.
  - So again...there are no little things...everything can be big.
- But when we think of the lives of the saints...
  - don't we tend to focus on the bigger things...
    - on the often miraculous ways...
    - that God manifested His love through them?
  - But they were only able to do those things...
    - because they were so faithful...
    - to each of these smaller things along the way...
  - And it's important for us to be faithful to these small things as well...
    - because...I believe...
      - that as the world gets farther from the Lord...
      - and the darkness around us...
        - and even in our Church...continues to grow...
      - we will be called upon...
        - to do more extraordinary things...
        - in the witness of our faith.
  - So we've got to be faithful...to doing the little things with great love...
    - so we can be ready and prepared for those big moments as well.

- This past Tuesday...
  - Deacon Kevin let me know...
    - that he posted a trimmed down version of his pro-life homily...
    - on his non-profit companies email forum...
    - in response to someone supporting abortion...
    - and trying to get others to go against Proposition 115.
  - Deacon Kevin was fired for doing so...
    - after near 12 years with that company!
  - It was a small thing...
    - done for the love of the Lord...
    - and a desire to help...with the salvation of souls...
    - and it cost him in a big way!
  - I immediately read him...the last two lines of our Gospel today:
    - *“Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you...
 
      - and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me.*
    - *Rejoice and be glad,*
      - *for your reward will be great in heaven.”*
  - I also heard other examples...from my brother priests...
    - at our monthly deanery meeting...
    - as they to tried to share the Gospel with their flocks these past few weeks.
    - One in particular was humiliated...shamed even...belittled...
    - and I read him...the exact same lines... *“Rejoice...be glad...”*
    - and we should be...because our hope...
      - it doesn't lie in hoping these big challenges go away...
      - but because we know...where they ultimately lead.
- My brothers and sisters
  - We are going to have...
    - many more big opportunities to witness our faith coming up...
  - because increasingly...
    - we are not “free” to have dissenting opinions...
    - from what's being forced on us...by this godless world.
  - But we are still truly free...to choose the Lord and His ways...
    - no matter what the temporal cost.
- So be faithful to your call...
  - be faithful to your call...to do the laundry...
  - be faithful...in those few moments of prayer...that you need each and every day...
  - be faithful...even to those Zoom meetings...that suck all the life out of you...
    - and do it all...with great love for the Lord...
  - because He's using them...to prepare you for bigger things...
    - and ultimately...for eternal reward.
  - As St. Paul said to the Corinthians:
    - *“...this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory...”* (2 Cor 4:17)